

pulled down over \$40 million. That's God's work, if you can get it. And, believe me, Wall Street bankers know how to get it.

□ 1400

#### SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LUJÁN). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2009, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. WOOLSEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

#### LISTEN TO US

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BRIGHT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BRIGHT. Mr. Speaker, on Tuesday night the people in Massachusetts reiterated a message too often forgotten in Washington, that message being "listen to us." I have heard this message for quite some time now as I go and travel throughout and across my district.

People are fed up and angry, and they think that Congress and the White House are not listening to them. They think that Washington is moving in the wrong direction and is ignoring them altogether. As we say in Alabama, the Massachusetts election was a bell ringer, and leadership needs to listen to that bell ringing.

The current state of health care reform epitomizes their disgust. We can all agree that health care is a concern and needs to be reformed. But what good is health care reform if people don't have jobs, if they can't feed their children, they can't pay their mortgage, they can't pay their bills? I have heard this message from my constituents, and I know our primary focus must be on the economy and jobs.

I am not alone in my opinions. Elected officials from across the country and across the political spectrum are hearing the same comments: Congress needs to focus on the economy; the health care bill is too massive; I don't like the process, are common refrains as I travel across my district.

Closely rivaling Americans' concerns about the economy is their wariness of Federal spending. Too often in the past, Congress was not held accountable by the people, but trillion-dollar deficits as far as the eye can see have awoken them, and rightfully so. For our children's and grandchildren's sake, we must get our fiscal house in order.

To be sure, these challenges are not easy to solve. Improving the economy in the middle of a budget crisis is a tall

task, but we were sent here to Washington by the people to be their voice and tackle these immense challenges.

There is plenty of blame to go around for our current condition. Democrats need to recognize that ambitious plans to address longstanding priorities such as health care, energy, and other spending initiatives must be postponed if the will of the people disagrees with this agenda. And Republicans must remember that they were in charge when hundreds of billions of dollars in deficits were common even when our economy experienced brighter days. History can't simply be swept under the rug.

Without further blame on the part of either side, there are some simple solutions that will help solve some of these problems.

First, we must reinstate statutory PAYGO. Statutory PAYGO budgeting rules were in place when we experienced record budget surpluses in the late 1990s. PAYGO rules are the only proven way for Congress to keep spending in check.

Second, we should pass a fiscal budget commission, and pass it cleanly. This commission will force Congress to act on legislation to reduce excessive long-term government spending and support for some kind of a fiscal spread across party lines. But, too often, leadership of both parties ignore these commonsense solutions. Let's come together, not as Republicans or Democrats, but as Americans, to do the work of the people.

In the coming months, leadership needs to heed the call of their own constituents and people around the country. They need to listen to the good ideas of people in both parties, and especially from the moderates who are willing to listen to and to work with the other side.

Let's put our heads together and fix the economy while not breaking the bank. Let's find smart and innovative solutions, such as the America Works Act and the Small Business Start-Up Savings Account Act, that will help get our economy back on track. Let's help small businesses and focus on improving Main Street and not just Wall Street. Let's extend the 2001 and 2003 tax cuts to give families continued assurance that the Federal Government won't be asking any more from them in these troubled times.

And while we are addressing these problems, let's get rid of some of the things that have divided us in the past. Let's stop using harsh partisan language and rhetoric that serves little purpose other than to undermine the faith that the American people have in both parties.

Let's sit down and thoroughly debate issues and not rush to pass a bill simply for the sake of doing something. Let's open the doors to the public so the public can see the legislative process.

And, finally, let's stay focused on the issues for which we have a real mandate: improving the economy and creating jobs.

These are lessons we should all take away from what the people, our constituents, are saying. I hope the leadership and the White House are listening today. It is not too late to change course, but we can't continue down our current path. The people are saying, Listen to us. And I certainly hope our leadership will heed that call before it is too late.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. PAUL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. PAUL addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

#### ISRAEL'S RIGHT TO EXIST

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, since the rebirth of the nation of Israel over 60 years ago, radical jihadists have relentlessly tried to destroy this nation.

Funded by Iran, Hezbollah attacks from the north and thousands of unguided rockets have rained down on Israeli villages. That is right: unguided missiles. That means they deliberately go anywhere and hit anybody where the missile is fired. That includes men, women, children. It doesn't matter to Hezbollah. They want to kill in the name of terror.

Hamas does the same thing in the south. Over 12,000 missiles have been launched into Israel from the Gaza Strip alone. I have been to Israel, and it is a small country. It is the size or smaller than the size of New Jersey. But yet from the north they get missiles, from the south they get missiles. But they still exist, and they have the right to exist. Israeli citizens fight these radicals rather than give up and surrender. After all, victory never comes by taking the path of least resistance.

These are unprovoked attacks into this nation. Israel is assured by us, the United States, that she has the right to defend herself, but sometimes we try to interfere with her own national defense. Israel is our strongest ally in the Middle East, and we need to treat her as such.

The whole situation is made even more complicated by Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons. The Tiny Tyrant in the Desert, Ahmadinejad, has the means to hit Israel with missiles. And not only Israel, but our troops in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Iran is the largest state sponsor of terrorism in the world, and to allow Ahmadinejad to have nuclear weapons is not a nuclear option. The Tiny Tyrant Ahmadinejad uses murder and brutality to try to silence protests in his own country of Iran. Imagine what he will do to the world if he has nuclear weapons.